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Home (<https://mywage.co.za/main>) > Labour Laws (<https://mywage.co.za/main/decent-work>) > Sick
 Leave (<https://mywage.co.za/main/decent-work/work-and-illness>) > Disability

Disability in the Workplace

All about Disability in the Workplace, Disability and Discrimination, Disability and Legislation in South Africa and more on Mywage South Africa.

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Approximately five million South Africans are disabled. This is around one in ten South Africans. Despite this, less than 1% of all people employed in this country are those with disabilities.

How is disability defined?

According to the Employment Equity Act in South Africa, people with disabilities are people who have a long-term or recurring physical, including sensory, or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospect of entry into or advancement in employment.

Are people with disabilities protected in the workplace?

Yes. The Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 protects people with disabilities against unfair discrimination and entitles them to affirmative action measures.

Does discrimination still exist in the workplace, despite legislation?

Yes. Unfortunately, ignorance, fear and stereotypes cause people with disabilities to be unfairly discriminated against. As a result, people with disabilities experience high unemployment levels.

Unfair disability discrimination is perpetuated in many ways, and can include:

Setting employment criteria that excludes disabled people (for example, stressing that an employee must own and drive a car).

Keeping disabled employees in low status jobs, earning a lower than average remuneration.

Inaccessible workplaces (lack of wheelchair access or ablution facilities for the disabled, for example)
Lack of appropriate technical workplace support.
Inappropriate or non-existent training for people with disabilities.
Bias and stigma.

What is being done about this?

President Jacob Zuma revealed in September 2011 that a Disability Act is being crafted to deal with enforcement, non-compliance and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The convention covers areas such as accessibility, rehabilitation, participation in political life, equality and non-discrimination of the disabled.

Zuma said in order to ensure the proper implementation of the convention, government was developing a National Disability Policy and its implementation guidelines. "We will also continue to promote the inclusion of persons with disability in the mainstream economy through instruments such as the Employment Equity Act and the Black Economic Empowerment Act amongst others," he said.

"The recent Employment Equity Commission report indicated dismal figures with regards to the representation of persons with disability at top and senior management levels in the workplace. This was put at 0.8%, together with that of African women.

"Solutions to this challenge that we are looking at include amendments to the Employment Equity Act to incorporate proposals such as increasing the fines imposed on employers to deter them from not complying with the Act," said Zuma.

Do persons with disabilities qualify for funding or grants from government?

Yes. To date, a total of 981 331 persons in South Africa with disability get a disability grant. 122 153 children with disabilities receive a care dependency grant to assist their care givers to look after them. 248 589 persons with temporary disability receive a temporary disability grant.

Find out more about Social Security and Grants. (<https://mywage.co.za/main/decent-work/social-security/social-security-grants>)

Read more

Find out more about Minimum Wages in South Africa (<https://mywage.co.za/main/salary/minimum-wages-old>).



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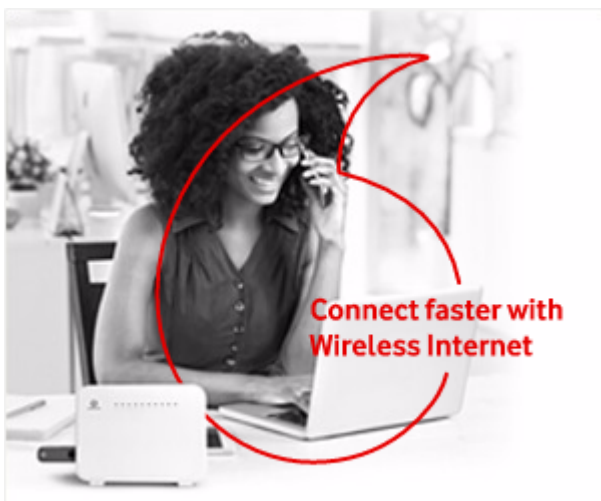
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